(c) With a view to utilise infrastructure of the various units of ITI optimally apart from upgradation of technologies; improving quality to international standards; adopting various cost reduction measures and laying stress on diversifying ITIs products and customers; the Ministry has taken a policy decision under which 30 per cent to 35 per cent of total DOT orders are kept reserved for ITI & HTL; taken together, for those items which they manufacure. However; no any concession in respect of price; quality or supply schedule is given.

Transfer o Officers in the Dot

3504. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken a decision to transfer officers in the Department of Telecommunications who have less than two years period to attain the age of superannuation;

(b) whether Government have recived a spate of requests to cancel such transfer orders even on heath grounds;

(c) if so the details thereof; and

(d) what action is being contemplated to grant relief to such officers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) No such general decision has been taken, Sir.

(b) to (d) In view of the answer to (a) above: no comment.

Criteria for opening post offices in accessible areas:—

3505. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNCATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the criteria laid down for opening new post offices in rural areas of the country;

(b) what is the number of eligible villages in the country where post offices are yet to be opened;

(c) what was the target fixed for opening of such post offices during 1994-95; and

(d) the achievement made in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) The criteria laid down for opening new post offices in rural areas of the country are given in the enclosed Statement. (*See* below)

(b) There are 7252 eligible villages in the country where post offices are yet to be opened.

(c) and (d) It was targeted to open 80 extra departmental branch post offices in such villages and 4 extra departmental branch post offices have been sanctioned against this target during 1994-95.

Criteria/Norms fixed for opening new post offices in rural areas:

(i) *Population*

(a) In normal areas:—

3000 population in a group of villages (including the propsed post office villages)

(b) In hilly; tribal; desert and inaccessible areas:—

500 population in an individual village or 1000 population in a group of villages.

(ii) *Distance*

(a) In normal areas:

The minimum distance from the nearest existing post office will be 3 kms